R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 013 688 RC 001 766

RURAL YOUTH-WORK PROGRAMS--PROBLEMS OF SIZE AND SCOPE.

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NEW YORK UNIV., N.Y.

PUB DATE JUN 67

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.50 HC-$2.64 66P.

DESCRIPTORS- *DEMOGRAPHY, *PROBLEMS, *GEOGRAPHY, *RURAL YOUTH, *EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS, STATISTICAL ANALYSIS, SUBURBS, RURAL AREAS, TRANSPORTATION, HUMAN RESOURCES, ADMINISTRATION, YOUTH PROGRAMS, STATE PROGRAMS, POLITICAL ISSUES, POPULATION DISTRIBUTION, T GROUPS, CENTRALIZATION, RELATIONSHIP, CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF UNEMPLOYED YOUTH,

DEMOGRAPHIC AND GEOGRAPHIC PROBLEMS IN RURAL YOUTH EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS ARE PRESENTED. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS INDICATES A HIGH PROPORTION OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY PROGRAMS SHOULD BE DIRECTED IN SUBURBAN AND RURAL AREAS OF THE NATION. TRANSPORTATION, WORK SITE AVAILABILITY, AND EXISTING HUMAN RESOURCES ARE LISTED AS MAJOR PROBLEMS CONFRONTING PRESENT PROGRAMS IN TERMS OF SCOPE AND SIZE. OTHER PROBLEMS INCLUDE ADMINISTRATION OF MULTI COUNTY AND STATEWIDE PROGRAMS AND LOCAL POLITICAL ISSUES. THE CONCLUSION, DESCRIBING AN OPTIMUM RURAL PROGRAM AREA, SUGGESTS THAT SUCH AREAS HAVE A MAXIMUM POPULATION DENSITY OF 100 PEOPLE PER SQUARE MILE OR 30,000 TOTAL POPULATION, INCLUDING A TOWN OF AT LEAST 10,000. IT FURTHER SUGGESTS THAT NO GROUPS SHOULD HAVE TO TRAVEL MORE THAN ONE HOUR FROM HOME TO WORK AND THAT CENTRALIZED STATEWIDE RURAL PROGRAMS WOULD ENHANCE LOCAL AND NATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS. (JS)

ED013688

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by

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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RURAL YOUTH-WORK PROGRAMS:
PROBLEMS OF SIZE AND SCOPE

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This publication is part of a project conducted by the N.Y.U. Center for the Study of Unemployed Youth under a grant provided by the Office of Juvenile Delinquency and Youth Development, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare to develop curriculum materials for program planners and operators.

SUMMER 1967

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF UNEMPLOYED YOUTH

PURPOSE

The Center for the Study of Unemployed Youth of the Graduate School of Social Work reflects fundamental policies of New York University to reach out and contribute to the progress and development of the community.

The Center engages in a variety of activities designed to contribute to knowledge of the multiple problems faced by unemployed youth and to assist in the planning and administration of programs for such youth. By facilitating the interaction between practitioners and academic specialists, the Center hopes to improve understanding and skill in each area of concern resulting from the unemployment of young people. The activities of the Center are supported with funds provided by New York University, The Office of Economic Opportunity, The U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, and the U.S. Department of Labor.

PROGRAM

Research. The Center is currently completing a three-year study of changes in work attitudes and performance of youth enrolled in the Neighborhood Youth Corps in New York City.

Curriculum Materials. The Center develops training materials primarily through workshops and institutes, participated in by planners and operators of youth-work programs among federal, regional, state and community agencies. The curriculum materials are intended to serve the training needs of personnel engaged in youth-work programs at all levels.

Technical Assistance. The Center offers technical assistance in the planning, operation and assessment of Comprehensive Employment Programs and the Scheuer Nonprofessional programs for selected metropolitan areas.

Training. The Center designs and conducts training programs for staff personnel of the Bureau of Work Programs.

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PREFACE

In the course of field visits to rural youth-work programs and in discussions with their staffs during the preparation of this paper, perhaps the most frequent complaint I heard concerned the alleged "urban bias" of federally-supported anti-poverty programs. This bias, I was told, is especially evident in manpower programs aimed at disadvantaged youth, where it ranges from the nature of the programs themselves to the discussion agendas of manpower workshops and conferences and the publications they produce.

Because of the vital role of the Community Action Agencies in youth-work programs, it is significant that an "urban bias" has been detected in their development as well. Prof. C. Edwin Gilmour told a National Association for Community Development conference in early 1967 that "the urban bias of the CAP has become increasingly evident." He specifically charged that "prepackaged programs are designed with urban resources and realities in mind; program guidelines and CAP memos are often neither meaningful nor appropriate for rural CAAs; personnel requirements . . . are impossible to honor, and program application forms and analysts' review requirements appear premised on sizeable and specialized CAP staffs . . . These are some of the procedural realities of OEO-CAP that frustrate and discourage the local CAP director or state technical assistant in rural America."

The specific "urban realities and resources" that planners of comprehensive youth-work programs (which are presumably the goal of public policy in this area) had in mind would probably include the presence of a concentrated target population, a reasonable level of local employment and work-training opportunities and a relatively broad variety of existing community social services. But these factors, I was told, simply cannot be assumed to exist in most parts of rural America today.

Complaints about "urban bias" have sometimes been met with the view that the problems faced by urban and rural programs differ primarily in degree—not in kind. It has been suggested, for example, that intra-city transportation poses the same **kind** of problem as rural transportation (admittedly over longer distances, for a sparser population and with the frequent absence of any public facilities), although perhaps in more critical degree.

It has been further argued that the inadequacy of existing social services in the racial ghettos is the same **type** of problem as their total absense in isolated rural areas. More specifically, some have maintained, the failure of most rural schools to prepare their pupils for the realities of the local labor market is balanced by a similar failure on the part of the urban ghetto

school. Finally, while one of the most frequently cited differences between the needs of rural and urban youth is that rural youth must often be prepared to migrate "where the jobs are," the response has been that urban youth must also be highly mobile if they are to take advantage of employment opportunities in other than "dead-end" jobs.

To some extent, of course, an urban emphasis in human service programs simply reflects the fact that three quarters of the nation's population will soon be living in urban areas. In addition, the social and political pressures generated by recent revolts in urban ghettos could be expected to influence priorities in program planning and allocation of funds. It remains to be seen whether government agencies will view the armed revolt of Spanish-Americans in Rio Arriba county, New Mexico, in June, 1967, as a "rural riot" and respond with funds and programs as they have done following "urban riots." Rio Arriba county has a population density of 4.5 persons per square mile, over half of its 5,000 families (70% Spanish-American, 10% Indian and 20% "Anglo") have annual incomes of under $3,000, and its unemployment rate is over 20%. The governor of New Mexico asked for a $5 million emergency grant from the Office of Economic Opportunity for "free bus transportation, legal aid and conservation work" for the area in the wake of the violence.

But an urban emphasis is far less justified in the specific case of manpower programs designed to reach disadvantaged youth, almost half of whom resided in rural areas as late as 1960. And despite the relative "invisibility" of the rural poor, the direct relationship between rural to urban migration and the growth of urban ghettos (almost one third of the youth studied who were seeking work training in the Neighborhood Youth Corps in the Bedford-Stuyvesant ghetto in 1966 were born in the rural South*) would suggest the need for effective "preventive" action through rural youth-work programs.

There are some recent signs, however, that "urban bias" has been recognized as a problem on the federal level. President Johnson's message to Congress of March 14, 1967, on "America's Unfinished Business: Urban and Rural Poverty" is significant both for its title and its content. The president described multi-county rural service centers as counterparts to the urban neighborhood service centers, proposing strengthening the rural voice in the OEO through appointment of an Assistant Director for Rural Affairs, and called for new grants to states for technical assistance to multi-county planning agencies.

The newly appointed director of the rural services division of OEO-CAP set new goals for his office in fiscal 1968 including, among others, the or-

* "Work Attitudes, Self-Image, & the Social and Psychological Backgrounds of Work-Seeking Negro Adults in New York City." Center for the Study of Unemployed Youth, N.Y.U. 1967.

ganization of 350 additional rural counties into 50 new CAPs, appointment of a rural specialist in each regional OEO office, publication of a guideline handbook for rural CAPs and the establishment of single-purpose agencies to operate programs in areas where (presumably political) problems prevent organization of a CAP agency.

If these signs and proposals are translated into effective action, the problem of urban bias will become less critical. But at the same time, rural program planners will be required to consider such issues as whether rural manpower programs should be based on distinct manpower strategies, to resolve such outstanding questions as public policy in the area of rural job development versus the encouragement of urban migration, and whether a basic program "model" needs to be developed.

At the same time, specific problems of size and scope need to be solved if a fresh approach to the problem of rural poverty is to be made. In addition to the problems of urban bias, rural program operators told me that their specific problems most often included transportation, sparse population, lack of existing work sites and existing agencies, personnel and other issues broadly related to rural demographic and geographic characteristics. These expressions of operational problems have been echoed at different levels. Dr. Gilmour, for example, told the NACD Conference: "What is needed now is immediate and extensive research on how to define the optimum-sized community under various criteria" and the director of the President's Advisory Commission on Rural Poverty, Dr. C. E. Bishop, expressed a similar view.**

This paper will focus on these problems of size and scope, since they arise at both the local program and national planning levels. It is primarily intended to be useful to the program operator and planner, not as a "how to do it" manual, but as survey and discussion material perhaps most appropriate to training programs for personnel is the field. And, hopefully, it will interest the policy maker as well.

As outlined above, the stimulus for the paper came from numerous rural youth-work program planners and operators and from discussions with rural manpower specialists, all of whom were contacted in the course of field visits as part of the Curriculum Development project of the Center for the Study of Unemployed Youth. My special thanks go to Dr. Gilmour of Grinnell College and Mr. Homer Bruno of the New Jersey Rural Manpower Development Program, who, also as part of the project, critically reviewed the draft manuscript of this paper. Valuable suggestions came from all of the above as well as from the staff of the Center for the Study of Unemployed Youth, but the responsibility for the views expressed here, as well as for any errors, omissions and misinterpretations, are mine. — Michael Munk

** NACD, **Rural Poverty Conference Proceedings,** Washington, April, 1967, P. 29.

INTRODUCTION

> "There are 21 million young people in America today, and 10 million of them live on farms or in rural areas. Those 10 million are easily overlooked by the rest of us. They seldom get into the papers. Many live in little cabins or eroded farms or on cut-over timberlands. Many live in isolated villages, where the passing motorist sees only a brightly lit filling station and does not see the closed factory, the dying local business district, the unrepaired houses by the abandoned railroad spur. Although nobody in these rural areas may actually die of starvation, the young people are often undernourished and fall easy victims to disease. In many rural areas, of course, there are prosperous farms and well nourished young people — good to look at. We look at them and forget the others — the youngsters who are unemployed and without much hope for the future. They are to be found in most communities. A local committee will not have to look far for some of them.
>
> From "Rural Youth" by
> David Cushman Coyle, National Youth
> Administration, Washington, D.C., 1939

With only a statistical change, similar statements can be found in much of the literature that has been responsible for the re-discovery of poverty in the '60s. While the nation's economic status is in sharp contrast to the Depression-dominated 30s, the reports of the National Youth Administration or the Civilian Conservation Corps from New Deal days describe problems similar enough to give today's program operators a shock of recognition.

The NYA even had its own "success stories," familiar to today's program operators. Coyle, for example, cited the case of

> "Perry, a poor farm boy in California whose family had known only poverty. But Perry was visited by a NYA worker, who drove 10 miles to reach his house and told him about the new opportunities for job training sponsored by the NYA. NYA got Perry a part-time job and enrolled him in a trade school where he studied electrical work. He then continued his training while performing actual wiring jobs with an electrician. Six months after starting with the NYA, Perry got a regular job with an electrical company and soon after moved his parents and brothers into a real home. Now he is carrying the full support of his family. All this boy needed was a chance."

But domestic economic problems, rural poverty among them, faded from government concern during the decade following the end of World War II. Despite the wealth of experience with subsidized NYA work training, CCC resident training camps for disadvantaged youth, and community development under such programs as the TVA, government policies toward rural America during the 40s and 50s were directed primarily toward problems of farm surpluses and subsidies to middle and upper-income farmers. Since the

socio-economic consequences of massive rural to urban migration were largely ignored both in declining rural areas and in deteriorating cities, the problems confronting policy makers in the 60s became especially acute.

By 1960, however, concern about high and persistent levels of unemployment in such areas as Appalachia, coupled with automation, was reflected in proposed legislation that, in 1961, became the Area Redevelopment Act. The ARA, an agency of the Department of Commerce, focused on regional, or area, economic problems and attempted to cope with them through industrial loans and grants to local development committees, public works at the county level, and later through the retraining provisions of the Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA) of 1962. The ARA approach signalled the beginning of a new look at rural America, a look that accepted, for the first time, that middle-income farmers and agricultural surpluses were not the totality of rural problems or even their major component.

The preliminary selection of "depressed areas" eligible for ARA aid consisted of 657 rural counties and 129 urban labor market areas comprising 240 counties. Over one third of the total population of 33 million in the two categories was rural, and public attention was drawn back to such areas as the Ozarks, Appalachia and the rural South after a distraction of 20 years.

There are many who believe that the accomplishments of the ARA were minimal (the remains of the program are now the Economic Development Administration). But some community development and grass roots planning (each designated area was required to submit an "Overall Economic Development Plan" drawn up by a "representative" committee) financed by a combination of federal and local funds, was attempted in many rural communities.

Today's youth-work programs are, with the exception of MDTA, components of the basic "War on Poverty" legislation — the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. The Neighborhood Youth Corps, its major component in terms of numbers of disadvantaged youth reached in both rural and urban areas, is based on two major assumptions: that disadvantaged youth will complete their high school education — and therefore qualify for existing jobs — if part time work is offered to them; and that high school drop outs can be trained in good work habits first and vocational skills later if "work experience" and supportive services are offered them together with a small subsidy.

In the development of approaches to the problems of rural youth, the emphasis of the new programs is on work training at the local level and through the residential Job Corps, on the regional and national level. Com-

munity development, especially appropriate for rural areas, continues to be stressed through the Community Action Agencies, but the basic departure of the OEO youth-work programs from those of the ARA is their focus on the poor—the people, not the "areas."

Experience of the NYC programs in rural areas during the past two years has revealed several major issues: (1) the problem of recruiting rural school drop-outs, (2) the inability of most rural areas to provide the broad range of supportive services, such as education, health, legal services, etc., required by a comprehensive manpower program, (3) the additional time and funds spent by rural programs for transportation, and (4) the essentially political problem of local government and power structure response to programs that, if they succeed, will change the social and economic characteristics of the rural areas they are designed to assist out of poverty.

On the national level, policy-makers have not yet made the fundamental strategy decision on whether rural youth-work programs should prepare youth for urban migration or for jobs to be simultaneously developed near their homes. President Johnson reflected this indecision in his 1967 poverty message by simply noting the existence of the problem but giving no hint as to the direction of his thinking on the question.

This paper will attempt to deal with these problems and issues in the following way. After a much-needed clarification of the various definitions of "rural" and "urban" youth and the size and location of this target population, the specific operational problems facing rural program operators will be discussed as issues of **scope** and **size,** since these include problems resulting from low population density, lack of tranportation facilities, absence of existing services, etc. Separate sections on administrative, political and labor market problems in rural areas follow.

While systematic construction of a model "optimum community" is beyond the scope of this paper, we shall attempt to form tentative conclusions about the **minimal conditions** of geographic size, program scope, and population density required for a viable rural youth-work program. This aim can be illustrated by the statement that no viable program can be expected to operate in, to use an extreme example, Lincoln County, Nevada. For although that county is larger than the state of Maryland, it has fewer than 2,500 residents of whom only a isolated handful could be disadvantaged and unemployed youth. This conclusion suggests that there is some combination of geographic size and population below which human service programs aimed at relatively low incidence needs should not attempt to operate. There may also be upper limits on operational efficiency, but for rural programs the lower limits are of critical interest.

Throughout the paper, the emphasis will be on the practical experience accumulated by rural youth-work program operators, especially in their efforts to overcome problems of size and scope. Finally, it should be made clear at the outset that no definitive criteria or blueprints can be imposed on the wide variety of programs operating in diverse conditions with differing combinations of components. For this reason, it is stressed: there is no substitute for thorough familiarity with the economic, social and political situation in one's "catchment area" (the area from which the target population is recruited). A viable youth-work program must be tailored to the specific requirements of the people it is designed to serve, balanced against available resources and labor market opportunities. The final decisions on an individual program strategy and tactics must be made at the community level where the problems of rural youth are confronted and where, if at all, the key to their solution will be found.

I: THE RURAL POPULATION

Who is "rural"?

Projecting from the most recent estimate[1] of the total resident population, there are 56.8 million persons (29% of 196 million) living in areas designated by the U. S. Census Bureau as "rural." Defined in this way, the rural population comprises three distinct and hetergeneous groups:

1) Non-farm residents of "fringe" areas of towns between 2,500 and 50,000 in population and open country outside Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSAs). This is by far the largest group classed as "rural" by the Census Bureau; it comprises about 32 million persons, or 57%, of the rural population and 17% of the nation's total population.[2]

2) Residents of towns and villages under 2,500 population outside the SMSAs. These number about 12.5 million or 22% of the rural population and 6.5% of the total population.[3]

3) The farm population — persons who live on farms in rural areas — is the smallest of the three major groups that comprise the population of rural America today. Its size is down to 12 million, only 21% of the rural population, and 6.2% of the total population.[4]

The important population shifts, for our purposes, occured not only in the well-known and long acknowledged migration away from the farms and into the cities, but also from farms into open country and the rural fringes. To illustrate this shift, Table I compares the population in 1920 (the first in which a majority of the population was counted in urban areas) with the 1966 projections.

TABLE I

POPULATION DISTRIBUTION[5] (in millions)

	1920		1966	
Urban	54 (51%)		139.2 (71%)	
Rural	52 (49%)		56.8 (29%)	
		as % of rural		as % of rural
Farm	32 (30%)	60%	12 (6.2%)	21%
Village	8.9 (7.5%)	17%	12.5 (6.5%)	22%
Fringe	10.1 (9.1%)	23%	32 (17%)	57%

It is clear from this comparison that it is as accurate to say today that the nation's officially defined rural population is in fact predominately a

rural non-farm fringe population, substantially suburban in relation to towns of less than 50,000 population, as it was 45 years ago to say that the rural population was agricultural and lived on farms. In fact, this shift occured only after Word War II: the 1950 Census was the first to reflect that fringe areas and open country overtook farms as the residence of a majority of the rural population.

To complete the national perspective on the rural population, we must add a further caution on the use of the Census Bureau's definition. Not only is a majority of the "rural" population obviously "non-rural" in character (92% works in non-farm occupations, with an urban-level 28% in manufacturing employment), but some portion of the "urban" population can best be functionally characterized as "rural." We refer here to a portion of the 35 million persons who live in towns of between 2,500 and 25,000 in size, especially those outside SMSAs. Some, perhaps as high as 5%, of these residents of small towns are in fact farmers, who reside in towns but work on a nearby farm. Other "urban dwellers" are non-farm workers who, because they live in small. isolated towns with over 2,500 population, share the same economic problems and level of available services with the functionally rural portion of the "official" rural population.

The Census Bureau's necessarily arbitrary 2,500 cut off point between urban and rural residence has created practical difficulties for rural youth-work program planners. In efforts to recruit disadvantaged rural youth in the sparsely-populated upper Michigan peninsula, for example, the program staff was unable to locate a sufficient number of such youth in farm country and towns below 2,500 to conduct an effective residential youth-work program. They therefore requested, and received, permission from the funding source (the Department of Labor's Office of Manpower Evaluation & Research) to recruit in the "urban" population centers of the three rural counties. These two towns, where many rural youth had concentrated, had populations of 4,000 and 3,000.

To draw an accurate distinction, then, between problems faced by operators of work programs serving rural youth and those serving urban youth, the Census Bureau's definition is clearly inadequate. Some, perhaps even a majority of officially-defined "rural" youth-work programs, do not face problems generally identified as "rural." At the same time, some (probably a small portion) of the urban programs serve rural youth and must cope with characteristically rural problems.

Other definitional and statistical problems present themselves when we turn to the terminology used in the manpower field. The OEO apparently

utilizes the Census Bureau's urban/rural definition when reporting on the numbers of rural youth enrolled in its programs, classifying them on the basis of the location of their homes. But when analyzing its grants to Community Action Agencies, it has adopted another definition of "rural" by basing it on the character of a county's population. Thus, according to OEO criteria, a county is rural if it (1) contains 50% or more residents classified as rural by the Census Bureau or (2) contains more than 50% "urban" residents but no political subdivision with more than 10,000 population.

These concepts must be borne in mind when analyzing OEO reports. For example, when the Job Corps states[6] that 40% of its Fiscal 1967 training positions are "earmarked" for rural youth, we can assume it refers to the home residence of the trainees as defined by the Census Bureau's concept. But when OEO states[7] that there are 613 rural Community Action Agencies in existence, we should note that some portion of them may serve counties in which all of the population is classified by the Census Bureau as urban.

Another concept of possible use by the rural program planner, but one that further adds to the complexity of the definitional problem, is that of the "outlying county" as developed by the Agricultural Policy Institute of North Carolina State University. These are counties which neither contained towns of over 50,000 nor touched such counties. Because it functionally defines isolated areas and the absence of a major labor market, this concept is especially useful for rural manpower planners operating in such areas.

Finally, we must note that employment figures developed by the Departments of Labor and Agriculture differ in both conception and calculation of rural farm employment. For the Department of Agriculture, the farm labor force numbered 5.6 million in 1965, divided between 4.1 million farmers and unpaid farm family members, and an annual average of 1.5 hired farm workers. The Labor Department, on the other hand, reports a total of 4.6 million persons employed in agriculture.

Another specific example of how the Census Bureau's urban/rural definition affects rural programs is from Tulare County, California, where the local Community Action Agency found itself barred from the housing loan program of the Farmers Home Administration because its population, although agricultural, lived primarily in towns between 2,500 and 5,500 in size (The FHA applied the traditional 2,500 limit). The Community Action Agency planners brought the problem to the attention of their congressman, who succeeded in persuading Congress to redefine the term "rural" in the

1965 Housing and Redevelopment Act to include towns with populations of up to 5,500. This new definition of "rural" also became part of the Water and Sewer Act of 1965.

The first conclusion to be drawn from this discussion of the various rural/urban definitions and concepts is that the program planner and operator should be aware of what they imply for his particular catchment area. Many federal programs distinguish between rural and urban areas in their guidelines and others have specific components that apply only to one or the other category. We have already noted, for example, that a rural youth-work program funded by OMPER had to request special permission to recruit trainees from rural towns that exceed the Census Bureau's population limit and were thus technically "urban." And we have also seen that one functionally rural but technically urban CAA succeeded through political pressure in altering federal guidelines and thus became eligible for a specific program.

The development of a functional definition of rural areas for the use of manpower program operators would appear, therefore, to be an important need. Such a definition might be based on population density, the proportion of the labor force employed in agricultural occupations and their distance from major labor market areas. Its utilization in program legislation and guidelines would avoid the inaccuracies and confusions of the current inappropriate Census Bureau definition of "rural," which in itself, reflects the preoccupation of the federal government with urban problems.

In the following discussions of the target population of disadvantaged rural youth, the meaning and limitations of the statistics, which of necessity are largely based on Census definitions, should be clearly kept in mind.

The Rural Poor

Housing and Urban Development Secretary Robert C. Weaver was exaggerating only slightly when in testimony before the President's National Advisory Committee February 15, 1967, he said: "It is by now well documented and widely understood that half of all families whose incomes fall below the poverty level are living in rural areas." The actual 1965[8] data are equally significant: fully 43% of the 34.3 million individuals who live below the Social Security Administration's "poverty line"[9] reside in rural areas. Table II compares the proportion of the 1964 rural and urban populations that are poor.

TABLE II
DISTRIBUTION OF THE POOR (1965)[10]
(millions)

	Total Population	Total Poor	as % of total Poor
Urban	135 (71%)	19.4	57%
SMSAs	121	16.4	48%
Rural	55 (29%)	14.9	43%
Farm	13	4.3	12.5%

A closer view of the relative incidence of poverty can be seen in Table III, which compares the proportion of the poor with the total population in the major residence areas:

TABLE III
INCIDENCE OF POVERTY[11]

	Total Population (1965) — (Millions)	Poor Population	Poverty Incidence
Farm Rural	13.3 (7%)	4.4 (12%)	33%
Non-farm Rural	42 (22%)	10.5 (31%)	25%
Central Cities	58 (31%)	10.0 (30%)	17%
Urban, outside Central City	76.6 (40%)	9.4 (27%)	12%
	189.9 (100%)	34.3 (100%)	18%

The figures show that the incidence of poverty as a proportion of the total population of the four broad areas of residence was highest among farm residents and lowest among residents of urban areas outside the central cities, and that the largest numbers of the poor are not, as might be expected, concentrated in the central cities, but in the rural non-farm areas (i.e., in fringe and open areas and in villages).

It must also be kept in mind when using data on rural poverty that all statistics reflect the heavy weight of the South. As the nation's least-urban and poorest region, it contributed 23 million rural residents (or 44%) to the nation's 1960 total of 54 million, and 48% of its poor families in 1964.[12]

Rural Youth

According to the 1960 Census, a total of 7.6 million persons between 15-24 were living in rural areas, or about 32% of the total population in that age group. This somewhat higher proportion of youth in the rural popu-

lation is due to higher birth rates in rural areas, and the consequent concentration of teenagers. While 34% of all persons between 15 and 19 lived in rural areas in 1960, the proportion of the next age group (20-24) dropped off sharply to 28.5%.

As a component of the total area populations, teenagers were most numerous among farm residents in 1960. While only 7% of the urban population were teenagers, the proportion rose to 8% in non-farm rural areas and up to 9.4% in rural farm areas. After the age of 20, however, this ranking was reversed: 6.2% of the urban population were between 20-24, compared with 6.1% of the rural non-farm and only 4.3% of the rural farm population.

Important for our purpose is the fact that until age 20 — or through high school age, youth comprise a higher proportion of the rural population than do their counterparts in urban areas. But after high school age, the proportion of rural youth drops sharply, reflecting the well-known migration of youth (especially farm youth) from rural to urban areas.

The age-sex structure of the rural and urban population shows three important differences: (1) larger proportions of youth in rural areas, (2) smaller proportions of working persons between 20 and 45 and (3) higher ratios of males to females. With the exception of the higher male ratio in rural areas, which is attributable to the location of military bases (and the return migration of widowed women), these rural/urban differences are largely explained by migration, especially from farms.

The Rural Negro Population

There were 5.6 million non-whites in the rural population in 1960,[13] or 10.4% of the total rural population. (920,000 of these were youth 15-24, or over 12% of the total number of rural youth). Over 5 million were Negroes (the other non-whites included mainly American Indians), and 96% of these Negroes lived in the rural South. Migration rates among Negro rural youth are significantly higher than for white rural youth. For while teenagers comprise almost 36% of the total rural Negro population, the proportion drops off to 26% for the 20-24 age group. The most common age for migration from rural areas, for both Negro and white youth, is between the ages of 17 and 18.

The Target Population

Drawing on the above data, we can define some of the basic characteristics of the target population: poor and disadvantaged rural youth.

While we know that the total number of rural youth included 6.7 million whites (15-24) and just over 900,000 Negroes in 1960, we do not know how many of them were among the 15 million persons living in rural areas in that year who were poor. But assuming that the incidence of poverty among the total rural population is similar to the incidence of poverty among those rural residents who are between 15 and 24 years old, we can arrive at an admittedly very rough estimate of the total number of poor rural youth by applying the poverty incidence of the rural population (27%) to its number of youth (7.6 million).

The result — two million poor rural youth[14] — can be sharpened considerably by breaking down the rural youth population into farm/non-farm and white/non-white groups and applying the poverty incidence rate in each of the four resulting categories. The results (Table IV) suggests that as many as three million rural youth were poor in 1960, and that while only about one in every five non-farm white youths might be eligible for youth-work programs, about nine of every ten Negro farm youth would be.

TABLE IV
POOR RURAL YOUTH (15-24), 1960[15]

	Total (Millions)	Poverty Incidence	Total Poor (Millions)
WHITE			
Rural Non-farm	5.1	20%	1.6
Rural Farm	1.6	50%	.75
NON-WHITE			
Rural Non-farm	.65	69%	.45
Rural Farm	.27	80%	.21
Total Youth, Both Races	7.63		3.01

Applying the same technique in Table V, we have arrived at a crude estimate of the number of the nation's poor youth that reside in the four major urban and rural locations. The table indicates that about 4.4 million of the nation's 24 million youth were poor in 1960, and that at least two million of them lived in rural areas. Although more intensive and sophisticated techniques might challenge this result, the crude incidence analysis indicates that the largest number of poor youth in the four categories resided not in central cities but in non farm rural areas.

TABLE V
AREA DISTRIBUTION OF POOR YOUTH (1960)[16]

	Total Youth	Poor Youth	As % of Area
Central Cities	7.0	1.2	17%
Urban Outside CCs	9.3	1.2	12%
Rural Non-farm	5.7	1.4	25%
Farm	1.9	.6	33%

It is probably safe to conclude, then, that the target population for rural youth-work programs will include a high proportion of the two to three million young people who are out of school and out of work in the non-urban areas of the nation. About 900,000 of them live in the rural South, and 600,000 of them are Negroes. Less than 40% live on farms, and about half live in the fringe or open areas near small cities. Most of them are teen-agers, who tend, after reaching the age of 20, to migrate (1) from farms to rural fringe areas or to cities or (2) from rural fringe areas to the cities.

Efforts to reach them must begin by knowing who they are and where they are.

II: PROBLEMS OF SCOPE AND SIZE IN RURAL YOUTH-WORK PROGRAMS

Planning and operating youth-work programs in rural areas, it has been asserted, requires a confrontation with specifically rural problems, in addition to coping with many issues common to urban programs. Our purpose in this chapter is to identify and analyze the more important of such rural problems and to report ways in which rural programs have coped with them. An effort is also made to discuss whether quantitative "minimal requirements" of various factors exists below which a program cannot effectively function.

Population Density

Perhaps the most fundamental distinction made between urban and rural youth-work programs lies in the location and concentration of their target population. Recalling from Table V that well over half of all disadvantaged youth reside in either non-farm rural areas or in central cities, the problem of reaching the youth in these areas comes into sharper focus. The term "central cities" implies urban ghettos, where both the population density and the concentration of the target population is very high. For example, the Harlem ghetto in New York has a population density of over 66,000 persons per square mile, of whom much higher than average proportion are both poor and young (the Bedford-Stuyvesant ghetto is even younger). Rural America, in which 29% of the total population lives on between three-quarters and 90% of the land area, has an overall population density of between 10 and 20 persons per square mile, compared with the overall 1966[17] density of 55.2 and an urban density (71% of the population on between 25% and 10% of the land area) of between 150 and 450 per square mile.

An example of how large a geographic area may have to be brought together and still not provide a sufficient population density to adequately support a youth-work program may be seen in the largest Community Action Program in the nation — the Southeast Montana Opportunity Center. This 9 county CAP covers over 26,000 square miles (larger than the combined states of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, Maryland and Delaware) and has a population density of only 1.7 persons. Such a dispersal of the population significantly affects its programs, which are concerned with the development of human services such as education, recreation, mental health and ranching improvement — not work training or employment.

The rural non-farm population lives, as was pointed out in the preceding chapter, predominately in fringe areas and open country within access of

towns between 2,500 and 50,000 population. These towns, however, are generally isolated from major metropolitan areas. The population density of fringe areas falls between the overall rural averages of 10-20 sq. mi. and the overall urban averages of 150-450 sq. mi.

This relative dispersal and concentration of the great majority of disadvantaged youth suggests that different strategies to reach such youth must be employed. While the store-front recruiting center or intensive door-to-door canvassing may reach a high proportion of the target population in central cities, such techniques are clearly inappropriate (or prohibitively costly) in areas where the population is dispersed. Door-to-door canvassing in open rural areas, for example, will reach far fewer youth per hour of staff time than in the cities. In addition, the non-farm rural poor are rarely concentrated in ghettos, but live scattered among the general population of the area, so that even in "fringe" areas of relatively high density, "ghetto type" recruitment programs can rarely be effective.

Recruiting disadvantaged youth living in farm or in other areas with similarly low population density may present an insurmountable obstacle, as was the case in Northern Michigan University's attempt to recruit rural youth for a residential training program.[18] The three sparsely settled counties chosen were located in the state's Northern peninsula, a declining agricultural and lumbering area. Efforts to recruit even 100 disadvantaged youth among the 27,000 residents of these rural counties failed even though intensive door to door efforts were made to reach each one of the out-of-work, out-of-school youngsters in the area. The program's staff reported that "during the early stages of the project's operation, it became evident that the eligible rural dropouts in the numbers stated in the project's proposal were not available." The population density of the three counties ranged from 7 to 10/sq. mi., or less than the rural average.

The staff, however, "determined that many strictly rural dropouts had migrated to county population centers (over 2,500 population) and consequently were ineligible." Only after recruitment efforts were shifted to these two officially-designated "urban" areas (the largest of which was a town of 4,000 inhabitants; the other had 3,000) was the goal of 100 trainees achieved. This example clearly illustrates the difficulty of recruitment in low-density rural areas, where even programs of small size in a large geographic area may be unable to recruit sufficient numbers of unemployed youth. It also reflects the inadequacy of the Census Bureau's rural/urban distinction, since the trainees recruited for this youth-work program would have to be described as "urban" although the Michigan project encountered typically rural problems.

The primary purpose of this discussion of population density has been to add to our framework before looking more closely at specifically rural problems faced by youth-work programs. As a "mimimal condition" for population density, however, we can suggest that catchment area population densities that approach the overall urban average of 150-450/ sq. mi. will permit utilization of "urban"-type recruitment for larger size (perhaps for 50 NYC trainees) programs, while densities dropping away from this figure will gradually require the adoption of smaller programs with typically "rural" recruitment efforts.

According to many rural program operators, federal guidelines relating to proportional limits on administrative, transportation and communications costs (the so-called "90-10" or "70-30" rules) are unrealistic for programs operating in areas of low population density. Transportation costs for program staffs are necessarily much higher in such areas than in the cities, and long distance phone calls are more frequently made because of the larger catchment areas.

These problems suggest the need for flexible federal cost guidelines which, while developed for the purpose of keeping down administrative costs of youth-work programs, have often placed severe limitations on their effectiveness in rural areas.

Transportation

In the experience of many rural youth-work programs, the problem of transportation has developed into one of the most critical issues, both in terms of program effectiveness and costs. The logistical problems faced by rural programs are not undully exaggerated by the following report[19] from an Action for Appalachian Youth project in Kanawha County, West Virginia, a state in which children who live more than two miles from a school bus route are not even required to attend school.

> "The county is over 900 square miles in area, divided by the Kanawha River, from which stem hundreds of small creeks. Along these creeks, usually at the head of each so that the stream-flow disposes of sewage, lie small 'hollow' communities of 20 to 50 families. A typical trip to one of these communities takes us 45 miles from Charleston. We must go 35 miles up one of the three main roads serving the county, then on to a gravel road paralleling the creek bed for another five miles; then another three miles along a dirt road. Finally, to reach the last family in the community, we must walk two miles up the side of a hill.
>
> "On the other side of that hill, at most three miles in a straight line, is another settlement. But to reach that cluster of shacks by auto requires a trip back to the main highway; then another journey

over a gravel and then again a dirt road — all in all, 23 miles to travel the three miles between the two communities.

"Even if all the roads were passable all year (most are not passable all winter and many are washed out during the summer) a bus transporting trainees from a center in Charleston to a place near their homes in ten such 'hollows' within a 45 mile radius of Charleston would have to travel close to 500 miles in the round trip at the average possible speed of 25 miles per hour (a speed fixed by the slope and surface of the mountain roads)."

The rural youth-work program attempted to cope with the transportation problem by utilizing surplus federal equipment and private donations to assemble three 15-year old buses, a carryall and several jeeps and trucks. The three buses were used on a daily route that began at Charleston at 5:45 a.m. on the three county roads. The staff of the youth-work program, meanwhile, used the remaining equipment and their own cars to transport 100 trainees from the hollows down to the three main roads to meet the buses. The program's staff believes that such a transportation system is at best a make-shift expedient and have suggested the development of a residential youth-work center in Charleston to cope with the transportation problem.

Transportation to work-training centers is not the only program component affected by the geographic size of the catchment area. The Appalachia Educational Laboratory reports that "employers are reluctant to hire applicants living in the outlying areas as they feel they cannot depend on them to be punctual or on the job."[20] This indicates a problem faced by rural job development and placement staffs.

Transportation was also one of the major problems faced by the statewide rural youth-work program in New Jersey. Now called the Rural Manpower Development Program — serving both youth and adults as an agency of the State Office of Economic Opportunity — the program requires a full-time transportation coordinator to cope with the logistical problems of a rural program.

Initially, recruitment efforts required the laying out of bus routes to transport 18-member work crews to 22 Neighborhood Youth Corps work sites, primarily in state parks and conservation areas. The bus routes required complex planning to most effectively pick up the trainees and deliver them to the work site in the shortest possible time.

Each new NYC trainee, when he was informed to which site he was assigned and the date of his first day on the job, was also told where he would be picked up by the bus. The route was planned on the following basis:

As soon as the required number of NYC trainees were recruited for a

work site, their homes would be plotted on a road map of the area, and various combinations of times and distances calculated for several alternative routes, with the shortest and quickest route finally selected. Except for breakdowns of the ancient buses, leased from a school bus company, the transportation program operated smoothly during the initial stages of the work program.

The New Jersey rural NYC program attempted to derive positive benefits from the fact that the work crew would be together from the time of pick up in the morning until the bus dropped them near their homes in the evening. The major innovation here was the use of the field supervisors of the work crews as bus drivers. The time spent in travel was therefore made available, to a limited degree, for informal discussion with the supervisor and among members of the work crew. The program planners, for this reason, discouraged the use of individual transportation to the work sites. There was no public transportation available, in any case, for the vast majority of the rural NYC trainees, but some indicated that parents or friends could drive them, and a few suggested they could walk to work. The program staff discouraged all such individual travel, in order to help the crew supervisor maintain better control and to encourage closer contact within each individual work crew.

After the first three months of the program's operation, however, the problem of transportation became critical again. As new trainees were recruited to replace drop-outs or those who had found regular employment, almost every trainee required a change in the bus route. In fact, the recruitment and selection process was influenced by the obvious advantage (to the planners) of trainees who lived on or near an existing bus route. While no youth was specifically barred from the program because he lived in a remote, hard-to-reach area away from the bus routes, recruitment efforts were not pressed as hard in such areas, and their residents' eligibility was probably investigated more closely. In later stages of the program, a few youngsters were in effect excluded from the program because of their remoteness from existing bus routes, which simply could not be stretched to accommodate them.

The bus routes operated six months after the start of the New Jersey rural NYC program, then, did not resemble the original ones. In most cases, they had to be lengthened and the total transportation time increased. One of the program's reports states that "Many specialized arrangements had to be made to prevent the program from becoming a gigantic bus ride for most youth."[21] These included requirements that the trainees walk or ride bicycles some distances from their homes to pick-up points or for members of their families to drive them to the bus route. In some cases, the field

supervisor-bus driver had to pick up trainees and drive them to the beginning of the bus route.

Transportation to the work sites, of course, was not the only program component where the problem was felt. It also impinged on recruitment, testing, physical examinations and counseling (which was often held under trees in the open air work sites). But the general problem was similar: In order to bring even a small crew of 18 youngsters together on a work site required a disproportionate amount of the staff's time, and also represented expenditures not required for similar NYC programs in a central city location. Staff time was a special premium, since an average of three hours a day was spent in activities related to transportation of the trainees.

At present, the New Jersey rural program requires a full-time transportation coordinator to manage its own transportation fleet, deal with maintenance problems, plan bus routes and in general, manage an entire logistical support office. He serves in a staff relationship to the program's line management.

While transportation problems, especially to on-the-job training and regular employment, pose serious problems to urban ghetto residents as well, the scale of the problem in rural areas seems to present a qualitively different order of priority. In most urban areas, at least, the residence of disadvantaged youth is relatively concentrated, even if training, testing and work sites are not situated in the same area. The existence of public transportation, whatever its inadequacies, is another distinguishing characteristic of most urban programs.

The map (page 26) graphically illustrates rural transportation problems. It shows the distances between settlements (two or more houses) served by the North Carolina Fund's Manpower and Mobility demonstration program in Richmond County, North Carolina, and the location of primary services in the town of Rockingham. While not intended primarily for youth, it nevertheless underlines the nature of transportation problems in rural areas.

The Fund's program is directed toward displaced tenant farmers and sharecroppers, and attempts to recruit them on a door-to-door basis for training in other occupations. According to the map, the distances between the residences of the trainees and the training center varied from 31 to 51 miles if the rural road was useable, and from 38 to 56 miles if it was not. In another of the six rural counties where the Fund's program was operating, participants lived between 7 and 35 miles from the town where training was offered. In that county, training was eventually offered in an open area (in an abandoned garage 13 miles away from the town) in order to be closer to

trainees' residences. Even then, transportation problems were not solved. The Fund reported several specific problems: while there was some local bus transportation in this rural area, the bus schedules not suited to the training times. In-town public transportation from the town's bus depot to the training center or to on-the-job training was nonexistent.

The Fund had no organized bus routes for this program, so staff workers made a total of 1,338 separate trips in their own cars to transport trainees from their homes to training, and to supportive services such as health, welfare agencies and food distribution centers. One trainee walked 26 miles to a job. As a long-range solution to this and other rural manpower program's transportation problems, the Fund's executive director testified before the President's National Advisory on Rural Poverty on February 15, 1967, and urged the "creation of a subsidized transportation system or systems that could serve the needs of isolated rural residents."

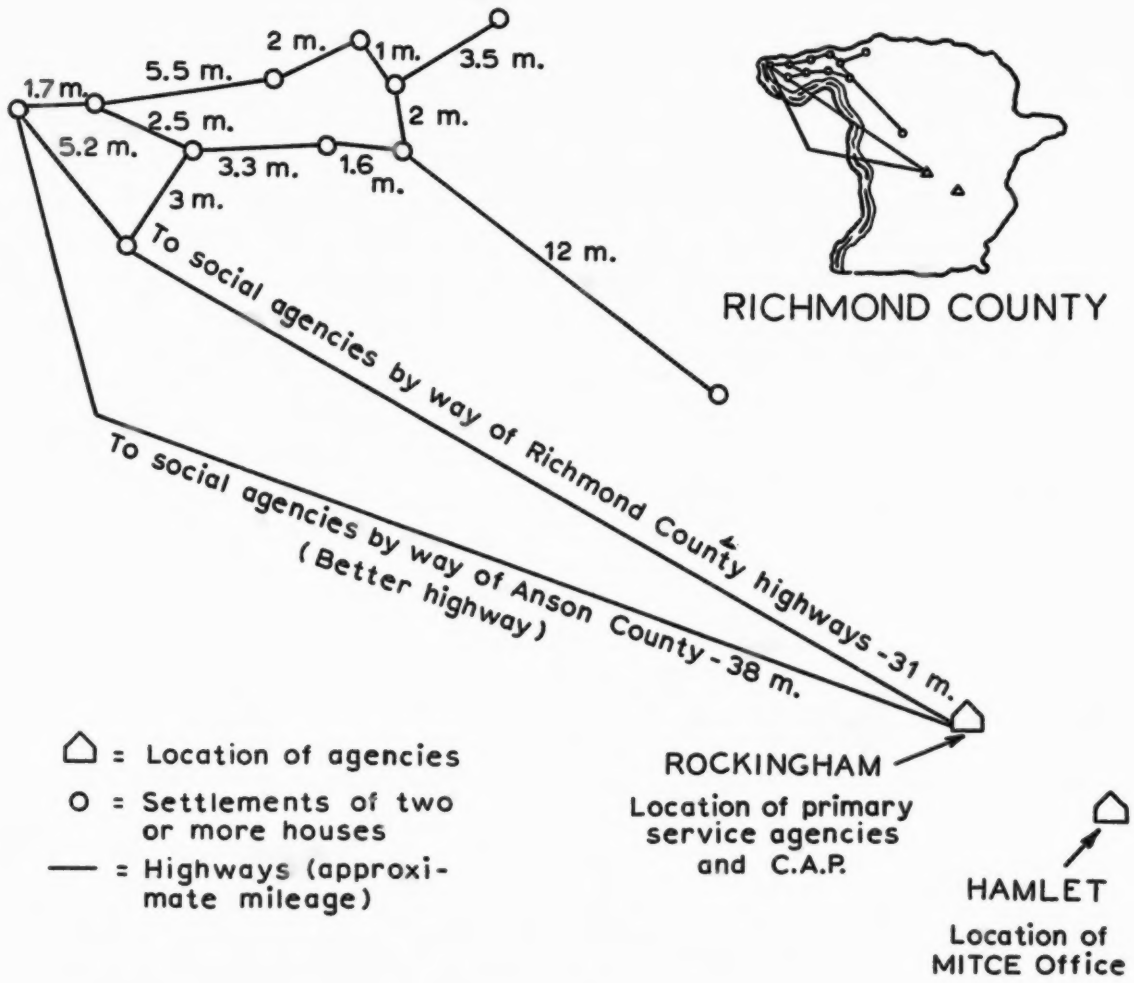
A "minimal condition" for transportation factors in rural youth-work programs should be expressed in terms of time required for trainees to reach training or work sites. Distance **per se** is not the major issue, since means of transportation and physical characteristics of the area can equalize the time required for an individual to travel 10 miles or 50 miles. We venture to suggest that *every effort be made to locate work sites and training facilities within an hour's travel time of all trainees making use of them.*

When no reliable and inexpensive public transportation is available, youth-work programs must establish their own transportation systems. If these are bus routes, the schedules should be planned with the target of one-hour travel time each way for the most distant or isolated trainee. By way of comparison, the only legislation known to the writer that relates to this issue established the rural vocational schools in Denmark, a small country of high population density (over 300/sq. mi.) The law stipulated that the schools be located so that no rural youth in the entire country would be further than 45 minutes away by public transportation.

In addition to the transportation problems encountered by rural programs, other communication facilities also have proven to be a source of difficulties. Mail delivery in rural New Jersey, for example, forced the statewide NYC program to move up its weekly payroll certification from Monday to the previous Friday because of complaints from trainees about late or lost checks. Phone communication in some rural areas, especially in the South, is still in an "underdeveloped" state. All these factors underline the need for more flexible guidelines in program funding; inefficient transportation and communications generally demand a higher staff-client ratio than do programs serving a concentrated target population.

Richmond County, North Carolina:

Location of target population and distance to primary service agencies.



In catchment areas where the population density is so low or the target population too dispersed to prevent program planners from approaching the one-hour travel time goal, consideration may be given to mobile facilities serving small numbers of trainees, relocation of facilities or, in the most extreme cases, centralized residential training centers. These will be discussed in more detail below.

Availability of Work Sites

Finding adequate work sites and facilities for the training of disadvantaged rural youth has frequently been cited as an important problem by rural youth-work program operators.[23] Basically, the lack of public employment — the major source of urban Neighborhood Youth Corps work sites — and industrial employment suitable for OJT training under the MDTA, are other functions of low population density. The rural program operator is also confronted with the related problem of finding or developing work sites that can help prepare disadvantaged youth for regular employment of the type that can be found either near their homes or, after migration, in industrial centers.

In the New Jersey rural Neighborhood Youth Corps program, for example, initial training was concentrated in state parks and conservation areas. Much of the work was simply cleaning up and preparing for the visitors' season as normally performed in the Spring. While some construction and demolition work was provided in these state parks, the program's planners attributed some part of the drop-out rate to the lack of specific work training. The state parks had been selected because they were the most obvious work sites in the rural areas where the target population resided, but it became gradually obvious that the NYC "training" was comprised primarily of repetitive menial labor for which workers were ordinarily hired at higher wages.

One attempted solution to the lack of work sites in rural areas was to utilize where possible military bases for training activities. The New Jersey rural youth program made such agreements with McGuire Air Force Base and the Lakehurst Naval Air Station. Since such bases are frequently found in rural areas, and since many have extensively equipped training facilities, rural youth-work programs operators may find them to be a source of diversified work sites and training centers.

A state-wide program, or some of the larger multi-county Community Action Agencies, can also investigate the possibility of establishing centralized pre-vocational centers in an effort to overcome the lack of work sites, but in most rural areas the large number of trainees required to justify ex-

peditures of such size would probably dictate that these be residential centers.

Residential training centers are, in fact, one of methods by which youth-work programs in rural areas of low population density can concentrate sufficient numbers of trainees to make a diversified training program economically feasible. Where training sites are not available to offer meaningful opportunities for rural youth, savings in staff time and transportation costs can partially offset the expense of centralized residential facilities.

Under 1966 legislation, some Title 1B NYC funds can be used for residential institutional training. Institutional OJT funds under MDTA include some transportation allowances for trainees. Both of these sources offer rural program operators the possibility of developing centralized and residential training to help offset the limited number of conventional work sites.

Centralized evaluation centers have been established in New Jersey's three rural manpower program regions. By bringing together a sufficiently large number of youths (and other disadvantaged persons) in a central place, these centers can provide a wide variety of testing, counseling and placement services that would not be feasible on a smaller scale.

The Job Corps Centers, of course, also offer a residential alternative, although their primary target population is youths whose home or neighborhood environments are considered to be detrimental to their personal development. These factors may or may not exist for rural youth who find transportation to the nearest work site impossible, but a CAP director in rural New York has stated[24] that the Job Corps was the only answer for youth in his sparsely settled and isolated county, where few public agencies exist.

Difficult as it is to suggest quantitative "minimal conditions" for other factors affecting rural youth work programs, qualitative terms alone are appropriate to apply to the availability of work sites. That term is "adequate," relative to the number of youth served by the program and "meaningful" relative to the types of regular employment for which they are being prepared.

The prime source of work sites in most youth-work programs, whether rural or urban, is in public and non-profit employment. Until the 1966 amendments to the EOA, Neighborhood Youth Corps work assignment were limited to such work, but private work sites are now permitted. It remains to be seen whether a sufficient number of such sites can be developed in rural areas, where private employment is often scarcer than public. Local government, school systems, hospitals and other human services have provided the great majority of Neighborhood Youth Corps part-time training in

work habits and attitudes, and it is the lack of such services or the small scale on which they exist in rural areas that is the major contributing factor to the lack of work sites.

Existing Human Services

Many of the specifically rural problems faced by youth-work program operators can be included under the general heading of the inadequacy or absence of existing human services. Closely related to population density, the extent and often the quality of available services has a direct relationship to the numbers of persons served. But the need for such services, unfortunately for rural youth-work programs, has no such relationship.

Since manpower services are of particular interest here, they can serve as an example of how population density and need are unrelated while density and availability are. Only half of the nation's 2,464 rural counties are served by the 1,800 local offices of the state employment services although each of the more than 500 urban counties contains one, and often several local employment offices. In the "black belt" counties of rural Alabama for example, there are no full-time employment service offices — the nearest are in Montgomery and Selma.

The need for manpower services, however, exists whenever a single worker seeks training or job placement. But local services become available only when a sufficient number of such workers seek such services to influence a decision by the state employment service to locate an office to serve them. Since the state employment services do not have the financial resources to offer services to all citizens who need them, decisions on office location are generally made on the basis of cumulative need — that is, where the limited number of offices can serve the largest concentration of persons using their services.

Other human services, such as education, are considered more fundamental than manpower services as a governmental responsibility to all persons. In fact, one of the first expressions of federal responsibility in public services was the setting aside of section 16 of every surveyed township for the support of rural schools in the Ordinance of 1785. Thus the organization of rural educational services offers some clues to the direction that expansion of manpower services, especially to youth, might take if their priority level was raised.

Rural education was originally organized around the familiar "one room" school house because each school was to serve all farm youth between 6 and 15 within a two mile radius of its location (two miles each way

was considered a fair distance to ask the younger children to walk). With the decline of the farm population and recognition of the obvious inferiority of the single-class school to the multi-class school, the number of separate school districts declined from 120,000 in 1935 to fewer than 30,000 today (some of the districts operate schools consolidated with other districts, so the number of separate school systems is even smaller). Despite this trend, there were still almost 10,000 one-teacher schools in rural areas in 1964 and over 10,000 school districts serving less than 50 students. The development of rural school bus routes enabled the concentration of more educational services to reach a larger number of pupils by expanding the geographical area served, but the historical two mile limit to pick up points still operates in some states (see page 21 for West Virginia's law).

Reorganization and consolidation have not increased the population of the service area in rural America to a point where the quantity and quality of its educational services are equal to urban levels. The basic problem here is financial, since local tax revenues and tax assessment practices severely limit the available funds in rural areas. State and federal funds, administered by the states, are usually distributed on a basis that attempts to compensate for population density, and enable rural districts to offer the state minimum number of courses. For example, Kansas, with a population almost 40% rural, assigns weights to its school aid formula that gives more aid per pupil to smaller school districts. North Dakota (rural population, 65%) gives rural schools between 125% and 150% more in per pupil grants than to its urban schools.

Rural school transportation aid is often weighed on a similar basis. The two-mile maximum is maintained by state law in Wisconsin for example, above which bus transport must be made available. Aid then varies from $24 per year per pupil for those who live between two and five miles from school to $36 for those who live over five miles away.

Although more recent statistics would probably show an improvement in the situation, 1956 figures[25] indicate the relative level of human services in rural America today. Fully 37% of all U. S. counties in that year had no welfare services, public or private, 27% had no full time public health agency, 25% no mental health services, 19% no public health nurses. In terms of private agencies, only 10% of all counties (almost all of whom are urban) had family casework agencies, 18% had charities with staffs and 9% had community welfare agencies with staffs.

The relative economic level of the school district, however, remains the most important determinate of the level of existing educational services. Just as urban districts differ in their desire and ability to provide quality

education, so do rural districts. In the prosperous farming area of Labette County, Kansas, (population density 39/sq. mi.) tax-paying farmers support a county community high school that, through the use of fast buses and good rural roads, is able to bring together 1500 students from as far as 75 miles away in little more than an hour. The size of this student body, coupled with higher teacher salaries than most of the state's urban districts, enables the high school to offer 148 different courses to the sons and daughters of the county's prosperous farmers and ranchers. The result is that almost 90% of its students graduate and over half go on to college. Another example of quality educational services in a rural area is Malheur County, Oregon, a large ranching county in southeastern corner of the state (population density 2.3/sq. mi.). There, the school district has established a residential (Monday through Friday) high school for the entire county, roughly the size of Massachusetts and Connecticut combined, because daily transportation could not possibly bring together a sufficient number of students.

Such examples, however, draw attention to the rule that because services which depend on population density and/or economic level, the rural areas must suffer. In rural Alabama, the other end of the scale, high school drop-out rates average 75% for both white and Negro youth — higher than the great majority of urban ghetto schools.

In addition to the relative lack of existing services in rural areas, there is the problem of human resources available to staff those services that do exist. The domestic counterpart of the current "brain drain" from Europe to the United States has been underway from the rural to the urban areas since the 19th century. For most persons, the pressures toward urban residence begin at the college (or even high school) level in direct response to the quality of existing educational services in rural areas. The brightest and most promising youth from the more prosperous rural families rarely return to rural areas after being attracted away by urban opportunities for completing their educations.

Similarly, attempts to recruit staff personnel for rural programs appear to be heavily dependent on the area's ability not only to meet competitive salary levels in urban areas, but also to offer social and cultural amenities to experienced specialists in the human services fields. Rural youth-work program planners have often expressed frustration at their inability to recruit competent staff (for which even the larger urban programs compete among themselves and with federal agencies). And even at the local level, the "brain drain" operates to entice the best of the indigenous personnel away from successful rural programs to fill positions at the state, regional and federal levels.

While attempts to meet the need for competent personnel for rural programs are being made by the provision of state, federal and private technical assistance and consultative services, and by such special training programs as the University of Wisconsin's CAP Technicians Training Center, the University of Missouri and other institutions, an approach based on an appeal to highly motivated, socially concerned persons is also worth consideration. Although the Peace Corps and the VISTA program primarily recruit youth, some experienced personnel have been attracted to programs in the rural South because of the possibility of meaningful rewards related to their social commitments.[26] Few rural programs, however, have developed the crusading quality of some urban ghetto programs. This condition reflects the typical dominance of conservative political and economic forces in rural areas and will be discussed in more detail in Chapter IV.

As an example of the technical assistance available to rural areas, the South Dakota State University Extension Service in Brookings received a $40,000 OEO technical assistance and training grant in April, 1967. It will establish a statewide program "to meet the needs of those low-density areas which cannot be covered by any one installation," according to the OEO, and will operate through county extension offices. Assistance will be available to CAPs (both county and local, and all delegate and affiliated agencies), for multi-county planning and preparation of education and information materials and data gathering, and is to be offered by state resource development specialists and agents.

Another possible approach to the lack of competent personnel is suggested by the provisions of the Allied Health Professions Act, which provides for federal loan forgiveness to doctors, dentists and optometrists who establish their practice in rural areas. The general concept of providing economic and other compensation for work or assignment in "hardship posts" is well established in such diverse organizations as the United Nations Secretariat, the U. S. Armed Forces, for U. S. corporate executives abroad and for industrial and service workers in Soviet Siberia. Yet the pay scale in rural human services, because of the resources of the local agencies, are most frequently below those offered in urban programs.

Since the level of existing services varies with population density and economic development, we would expect social indices of rural areas to reflect the consequences of their disadvantage. And they do. In education, urban adults averaged 11.1 years of school attendance in 1960 compared to 9.5 years for non-farm rural adults and only 8.8 years for farm residents.[27] School retardation, measured by the number of children enrolled in grades lower than expected for their age, is 60% higher in rural areas than in urban. Educational achievement is also significantly lower. Although the high

(25%) proportion of the Southern rural population that is Negro and subjected to the well-known effects of racial discrimination is an important factor in these educational distinctions (urban Negroes average three years ahead), rural whites also measure lower (by two years) on these indexes than do urban whites.

The existence of fewer health services in rural areas reduces the average number of professional health personnel per capita there to about half the urban average, and the number of visits to such personnel in 1964 from 4.8 in the Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas to 4.3 in non-farm rural areas and to 3.3 in farm area.[28] Dental visit statistics show similar disadvantages for rural America. Perhaps the debilitating urban physical environment (such conditions as air pollution, over-crowding, etc.) tends to offset the lack of health facilities in rural areas, since adult death and infant mortality rates are not significantly different between urban and rural areas. Statistics, however, are based on hospital location, and many rural residents utilize urban hospitals.

Rural housing is in especially poor condition compared with urban. Fully 44% of all unsound housing was located in rural areas in 1960, although these contained less than 30% of the total housing supply. About 10% of the rural population (concentrated, again, among Negroes in the rural South) lived in housing officially described as "endangering the health, safety and well being of its occupants." And although only 2.5 times as many persons lived in urban areas, expenditures for their housing, public and private, was 36 times greater than in rural areas.

A special aspect of the lack of existing human services in rural areas presents itself in programs based on the Community Action Agency approach to poverty. The disproportionate amount of anti-poverty funds (relative to location of the poor) that go to urban areas has been traced by Sar Levitan[29] to the CAP concept itself. The failure of rural areas to receive their "full share" of these funds, Levitan states, "is not only the lack of rural sophistication in the art of grantsmanship, but is also inherent in the lack of facilities and unavailability of delegate agencies which would undertake the administration of anti-poverty programs." In urban areas, by contrast, the number of "delegate agencies" is so large that CAP programs more typically are faced with conflict between available agencies eager to administer programs.

The basic solution to the lack of human services in rural areas has been consolidation and reorganization, based on the assumption that if, for example, a given county cannot support an adequate level of these services, several adjoining counties can. The organization of 1,535 rural counties (according to the OEO definition) into 613 CAPs is the leading example of

this effort. The average number of rural counties per CAP is 2.25, although CAAs serving seven, eight and even nine counties are not uncommon.

But with each additional county included in a program's catchment area, the problems of distance and transportation are multiplied, as are the number of government agencies that must be dealt with. Nevertheless, rural program operators report that in dealing with several county and governments, agreements reached with one government tend to be more quickly accepted by others, forming a "domino effect."

The sharing of specific services in an effort to bring them to the people is exemplified in such programs as the Smaller Communities Program of the Employment Service. Under this program (about whose experience, if any, little is known) a mobile team of interviewers and vocational counsellors is to spend up to three or four months in a rural area, registering and testing unemployed and underemployed workers. The sharing of school vocational counselors between several rural school districts is a further example of enlarging a catchment area to a size sufficient to justify specialized services of this kind.

Another theoretical approach to the issue of services and population density is the establishment of catchment areas that deliberately include poor and prosperous areas, urban and rural, for purposes of human service planning. According to the EDA,[30] the concept (which it calls the "Development District") reflects the recognition that *scale* is a powerful force in modern economic development. "Both consumer and producer have much to gain by locating themselves in close proximity to each. The provision of a wide variety of services at low cost is possible only when there is a substantial market within a reasonable radius. This is as true for such consumer services as health and education as it is for producer services such as transportation and warehousing."

A broader use of this concept would be the establishment of special districts — or catchment areas — for services that freely cross county, municipal and other formal boundaries in order to combine relatively poor and prosperous areas in much the same way as some have proposed that Negro and white school districts be combined in urban areas to upgrade educational quality. But the political obstacles to be overcome if such population concentration was effected in rural areas appear to loom so large as to assign the approach to the Utopian category.

It is sometimes possible for rural CAPs to provide services directly where delegate agencies are not available or if they are inadequate. Health centers, remedial education and similar services can be financed under

various legislation, but this usually creates sharp friction between established school and health districts regardless of whether they are actually providing services in the needy catchment area. Nevertheless, such an approach goes to the heart of a problem more often seen in urban manpower programs, when CAP services have attempted to "duplicate" existing programs when the latter were found unable or unwilling to reach the disadvantaged population. Rural programs with sufficient political "clout" would appear to be the only ones that could risk such direct confrontations with existing political and service agencies and groups.

Finally, the concentration of the target population at the same point where services are available can be effected through residential centers. These are based on the assumption that services cannot be made available in other feasible ways for low density and other remote areas. One of the factors in a decision to establish residential type training would be a close comparison of the high costs of residential services against the costs of mobile, consolidated or reorganized services.

III: ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS

The basic administrative unit in rural America is still the county, (or, in New England, the town) although school, sanitation, fire and other special districts have multiplied rapidly in recent years. Most (2,464) of the nation's 3,043 counties are "rural" under the OEO's definition.[31] Almost 2,000 of these rural counties contain fewer than 25,000 persons while, at the other end of the scale, the 277 counties with over 100,000 contained 61% of the total population.[32]

For the rural county, one of the first problems is that its size has little relationship to its function. Most county boundaries were drawn in the 19th century, when one of the criteria for their geographic size was a county seat location where a horse and buggy could take a resident and return in one day, after deducting several hours for transaction of business. Clearly enough, this criterion has no meaning today and the quality of county government reflects the general decline in its functional justification.

Multi-County Programs

For this reason, most rural CAPs, as noted above, are multi-county in scope while the local government units with which they must deal remain on a county basis. Obviously, CAPs have experienced enough difficulties in their relations with single county governments so that the consequences of a multi-county organization are largely that of multiplied problems, such as bureaucratic delay, more complex coordination, and the time required to dealing with a multiplicity of county governments. One nine-county CAP in Missouri, for example, deals not only with the 9 county governments, but also — since other services are organized along county lines — with four employment service offices, four vocational rehabilitation districts, and six health districts. Some of the special districts that are not coterminous with county lines, on the other hand, may have to deal with more than one multi-county CAP.

It would seem then, that thus far the typical response to the problems of inadequate population density and level of existing services has been the multi-county organization, and that it has not provided a final answer to the problem. An alternative, chosen by New Jersey, was the development of a state-wide rural youth-work program. Originally, this program was administered from a central office in the state capital, but problems of sustained operation indicated that an overly centralized program must also be avoided.

State-Wide Programs

Briefly, the New Jersey program operators found[33] that after the initial recruitment phase during which centralized direction appeared adequate, the need for more intensive recruitment resulting from dropouts and job placements among the original group of Neighborhood Youth Corps trainees, required a greater number of operational decisions than could be made effectively in the central office. Senior staff members found themselves spending inordinate amounts of their time in travel to solve problems ideally handled by a middle-level of management. The gap in operational responsibility between the field supervisors at the work crew sites and the planners on the state level was simply too large.

The indicated solution to the problem of over-centralization was regionalization. The state was divided into three main areas, and a regional supervisor appointed to represent the missing middle level of decision-making authority. While the solution was effective in reducing the number of day-to-day decisions made by the central staff, it did not succeed in solving the de-centralization problem.

The program's budget limitations did not permit the hiring of personnel for the positions of field supervisor who were equally competent in such areas as counseling, job development, education, rehabilitation and program evaluation. These technical services therefore were retained at the state level. Thus, the regionalized program administration consisted of de-centralized manpower operations and centralized supportive and technical services.

It thus appears that over-centralization creates a different order of problem from that of over de-centralization. County or multi-county groups often lack the resources to recruit disadvantaged youth for work training and placement and, as local units, are forced to deal primarily with other local government units. A centralized administration backed by political authority at the state level can overcome these problems, but at the same time must carefully consider the need for a middle-ground within its administrative structure for operational decision making. Technical and other supportive services, however, appear to require a division of labor and specialization whose administration can only be financed at relatively high levels of program size and scope.

E. M. Redwine, director of the OEO's Manpower Division, implicity agrees with this conclusion. Discussing the need for comprehensive manpower programs that would not only recruit, test, train and place a needy worker, but also provide the educational, counseling, health and other

services necessary to place him in regular employment, Redwine concludes that[34] "ordinarily, the rural CAP is not equipped to organize and operate a comprehensive manpower program." He suggests that a combination of all the above program components "may be beyond the capability of the rural community." His advice to rural programs operators is to ask for technical assistance from the BES regional office, the state employment service, OEO regional offices and the OEO rural services division (formerly Rural Task Force) in Washington.

Size of Programs

Internal administrative problems of rural youth-work programs do not, on the other hand, appear to differ significantly from urban problems in this area. Generally, the structure of a rural program is smaller, less specialized and serves a smaller number of trainees. The "typical" rural Neighborhood Youth Corps program, if one can be identified, seems to be one administered by a county board of supervisors (or other form of rural county government), which frequently delegates operation to the local school district. Administrative problems tend to grow in size and importance as the program becomes more complex and moves in the direction of being comprehensive.

On the other hand, the administrative problems inherent in coordinating a variety of manpower programs together with supportive services which often aflict large urban youth work programs rarely arise in the smaller rural programs. But, as illustrated by the multi-county CAPs relationship to a multiplicity of local government and special districts, it would also seem that the rural tradition of informal, face-to-face resolution of local administrative problems is undermined by the emergence of multi-county structures.

One area where specifically rural administrative problems may arise is in transportation. Arrangements for buses or other vehicles, the planning of pickup routes and other aspects may require a full time staff member. In smaller programs, transportation planning is usually handled by a line administrator.

"Neighborhood" Service Centers

Despite the problems encountered by the multi-county program concept in rural areas (and these are somewhat mitigated by the "domino effect" described on page 34), this is the solution apparently favored by the federal government for programs operating in areas of low population density. President Johnson's 1967 Poverty Message implies that multi-county service centers can be the rural equivalents to urban neighborhood service

centers, in that a variety of services, not otherwise feasible, can be provided in a central location for a larger catchment area.

"Community of Solutions"

The greater flexibility of such an arrangement might be significantly enhanced if the catchment areas were planned, not on the basis of existing county or other special district boundaries, but on the concept of the "community of solutions."[35] The boundaries of such areas is planned on the basis of the type of service required relative to the incidence of need among the population and the transportation limits enforced by geography and type of transport facilities.

For youth-work programs, for example, the "community of service" could be planned by determining the level of need among the unemployed and disadvantaged youth of an area relative to the size of the program being planned. If 50 NYC out-of-school trainees were being sought, the catchment area would be extended until the required number of youth for whom adequate transportation could be arranged were recruited.

Problems associated with this approach are not only political. In a sense, they militate against the concept of comprehensive programs since the area required for youth-work services might be a good deal larger than the "community of solutions" for health programs. Nevertheless, such problems lie at the limits of current thinking in the area of social planning and demand further research and prompt experimentation.

IV: POLITICAL PROBLEMS

The most prominent debate among manpower experts in the area of rural problems has centered around the migration issue. It would be difficult for program operators in most rural areas to openly base their manpower programs on the assumption that local job development was impossible. Lee Lukson, director of the Yakima Valley (Washington) Council for Community Action, told the National Advisory Commission on Rural Poverty that the "urban bias" against rural development is unsound. "Why is it," he asked, "that a labor surplus in the cities never produces the argument that migration is the only solution? New York City's metropolitan area now has 225,000 unemployed. But there are no editorials in any New York paper saying that the unemployed should emigrate from the city."

The Yakima CAP director's position illustrates again the division of rural program goals between those with central cities over 10,000 and those below. Yakima itself is not a typical rural town. It has a population of almost 50,000 with an equal amount in its rural fringe (Yakima county population is 150,000). Its rural CAP is orienting its comprehensive manpower program to the retaining of unemployed rural workers for non-farm employment in the Yakima area before they are lured to the Seattle metropolitan area (only 120 miles away). In short, with the population density of the Yakima CAP's area, its orientation would be expected to tend toward growth and "community development."

The South

But much of rural America, especially its most economically depressed portion, presents the program planner with an entirely different picture. An example of what obstacles to economic growth are placed in the path of the rural poor by groups which benefit, economically and politically, from their poverty, can be seen in the recent experience of the Southwest Alabama Farmers Cooperative in requesting OEO funds.

In April of 1967, the OEO was reported to be "almost ready to approve" a $600,000 grant to the rural co-op, which was organized by poor (but not the poorest of the poor) Negro farmers in Alabama's Black Belt — one of the most depressed rural areas of the nation. At this point, a delegation comprised both of Alabama's senators and four of its eight representatives visited the OEO director's office where, for three hours, they expressed their opposition to the program. The congressional delegation was speaking on behalf of "many of the county and city officials" of the 10 Black Belt counties in which the cooperative would operate, as well as the owners of the major packing companies in the area.

The purpose of the cooperative, of course, was to increase the income of the poor farmers by allowing them to purchase their supplies more cheaply and sell their produce at higher prices. The opposition was based on two grounds: political and economic. The white power structure of the Black Belt, through which the white minority has historically dominated the area, was fearful of recent political organizing efforts by the local Negro population, and felt the organization of cooperatives, impossible without federal aid, would enable the political groups to develop a more adequate economic base for their efforts. The local packers, of course, were opposed to paying higher prices for their products than they were paying by dealing with each Negro farmer separately.

The OEO, after the congressional visit, announced that "no decision had been made on the proposal" and that it was still being "closely studied by the agency's economic advisers."

In May, however, despite opposition from the state and local power structure, the OEO announced it would approve a smaller ($399,000) grant to the cooperative after political pressure was applied by several labor, liberal and church groups, including the Citizens Crusade Against Poverty. The Governor of Alabama promptly announced she would veto the grant, under the provisions of the EOA. Nevertheless, the OEO director was expected to override the Governor's veto (also under the EOA provisions), but in a quid pro quo understanding would let stand an earlier veto of a rural leadership and technical assistance training project funded by the OEO to a private agency, the National Sharecroppers Fund. Apparently, one overridden veto per year is the OEO's informal quota for Alabama.

The contrast between the two rural areas opens the issue of manpower development to a view from a political perspective, for the Community Action approach to manpower programs is based on the assumption that local government and other leaders are in agreement that economic and job growth is desirable. This is certainly the case in such areas as Yakima, where the rural CAP manpower program may be expected to bear results. But it is just as certainly not the case in many parts of the rural South (where, it will be recalled, a large number of the disadvantaged rural youth in the nation reside).

The National Level

But the lack of experienced and committed local leadership, so often cited as the major barrier to rural economic development is not the only political obstacle. The obstacle also exists, as the Alabama case illustrates, on the national level as well. Dr. C. Edwin Gilmour has noted[36] that the

membership of the House and Senate Agriculture committees (which have major influence on all federal legislation effecting rural areas) is composed of some of the most conservative members of Congress. The five senior Democrats on the senate committee showed "conservative" voting indexes (as calculated by the **Congressional Quarterly**) of 89, 87, 82, 75 and 71. The 10 ranking Democrats in the House committee included seven with indexes of 80 or higher, and one each with 59, 40 and 24. (The latter was not re-elected in 1966).

An example of federal action on rural development occurred in 1967, when the Administration cut its budget request for the Department of Agriculture's Community Development Services from an already miniscule $637,000 appropriation for fiscal 1967 to only $450,000 for fiscal 1968.

As Lukson pointed out in his testimony, the OEO assumes that local "CAPs are composed of people who are familiar with federal programs and with the use of federal funds and who presumably do not share the widespread local bias against the 'feds'." The most important characteristic of this alleged "local bias" against federal programs is that it exists only against those programs that threaten to challenge the existing balance of economic and political forces. Witness the upper-income farmer and rural businessman's propensity to support farm subsidy and loan programs that benefit those with annual sales over $10,000, and to oppose such programs as loans to the Negro farmers co-op in Alabama.

CAPs and the Local Power Structure

While problems of political relations between CAPs and established local governments, welfare and health boards and school districts are also a feature of urban programs, the level of frustration expressed by rural youth-work program operators appears especially high. The rural South, again, provides some of the sharpest examples of these problems. Ted Seaver, member of the Hinds County (Mississippi) CAP, has charged[37] that of almost 2,000 out-of-school Neighborhood Youth Corps slots in his state, Negro trainees are almost invariably assigned "traditional 'Negro jobs' ", while the few white-collar work sites (primarily in the state employment service offices) are reserved for white youth.

Seaver expressed his frustration by asking: "How does one try to convince a local school board, for example, to have a creative remedial program when they are still plotting how to thwart integration? How do you get a local employment office to aggressively seek opportunities for Negro youth, when you are still fighting a battle to integrate its staff and use courtesy with Negro applicants? Where do you find trained — much less well trained — social workers, when the whole profession is suspect, there are

no schools of social work in the state, and the local chapter of the National Association of Social Workers says the welfare system is adequate and resents violently any criticism of it?"

Seaver concludes by describing what he calls the Southern "game" of "CAP Politics, or OEO vs. the People" in which, basically, he charges that the OEO has acquiesed in local power structure control of OEO programs. As a remedy, he suggests (1) OEO refusal to fund "bad" programs (2) willingness to fund programs that attempt to provide services now either not available or controlled by groups with a vested interest in the *status quo* and (3) willingness to fund programs by private agencies if CAPs are found inadequate. In return for this committment at the federal level, Seaver calls for creation of "gutsy, creative CAPs" by local residents.

A more scientific study of the attitudes of some rural agencies toward the poor by Cebotarev and King[38] found that the Cooperative Extension Service Executive committee and staff in Mifflin County, Pennsylvania (which is 40% rural and 24% poor) opposed federal manpower programs generally and considered the disadvantaged population in the county to be "lazy." Cooperation between such agencies and rural manpower programs is not likely, and program planners must be prepared to deal with such obstacles in politically effective ways.

In a discussion of operation problems of rural youth-work programs, there is little opportunity to analyze such political problems at greater length. But political problems are constantly faced by program operators and are the subject of extended discussions at informal meetings. They seem to form, then, an "underground" problem — recognized as major by program operators but rarely discussed in the literature and training materials of the field.

V: RURAL YOUTH AND THE LABOR MARKET

The rural youth's experience in the labor market is the critical payoff for any youth-work program. If the rural labor market was sufficiently tight to induce employers to hire any and all rural youth at an adequate wage for jobs located within reasonable distance from their homes, no special government manpower policy would be necessary and no programs to prepare youth for employment would need to be established in rural areas — private employers would have to provide training themselves.

If, on the other hand, the rural labor market (defined for our purposes as the net difference between labor supply and labor demand in rural areas) was so loose as to clearly preclude any chances for reasonable employment of the vast majority of rural youth, government rural manpower policy should probably be directed toward encouraging migration to urban areas. The current condition of the rural labor market appears to lie somewhere between these two extremes and therefore confronts the rural youth-work planner with the need to develop distinctly rural manpower strategies.

Employment and Unemployment

First, it should be evident that the employment implications of the term "rural" are not only not synonymous with "agricultural" or "farm," but are rarely even related. In addition to the fact that 79% of the shrinking rural population does not live on farms, fully 40% of farm residents were not engaged in agricultural[39] occupations in 1960. (Since a certain number of rural non-farm and even "urban" residents are so engaged, the proportion of the civilian labor force employed in agriculture was identical (1965) to the proportion of the total population that lived on farms (6.2%, or 4.6 million out of 72.2 million employed).

Using the Census Bureau's definition of place of residence, the rural force totaled about 20 million persons in 1965, or 36% of the total civilian labor force. Less than 5 million of this rural labor force worked in agriculture,[40] according to the Department of Labor's concept of employment (The Department of Agriculture estimated average monthly farm employment to be 5.6 million in 1965 — 4.1 farm owners or operators and their unpaid family workers, plus 1.5 million hired farm workers).

Unemployment rates for this rural labor force are generally about 40% higher than for the urban labor force. In 1966, agricultural unemployment officially averaged 6.5% against a national average of 3.4%.[41] Only construction workers among the other industrial divisions suffered a higher (9%) rate. Together with underemployment, measured as involuntary part time work (which totaled 2.5 million man hours in 1965), the work time lost to unemployment by the rural labor force can be translated to an unem-

ployment rate of 26.5% for farm residents and 12% for rural non-farm residents.

Underemployment in the farm labor force is found among the 1.5 million hired farm workers (and the 3.4 million who did some hired farm work during the year), of whom only 300,000 were employed full time during the year. Over 160,000 were unemployed at least half the year. Migratory farm workers, who are especially disadvantaged, are officially estimated to number 400,000 by the Department of Labor, but statistics on the agricultural labor force are far less reliable than for the urban workers.

The most important employment trend in the rural labor force is its different experience relative to its distance from urban centers. As Dr. George Tolley[42] has found, "The rural fringes of metropolitan areas have experienced rapid population growth and increased non-agricultural employment, whereas rural areas more removed from metropolitan centers have lagged greatly in the growth of nonagricultural employment."

Trends: "10,000 and Over"

Several specific trends have been noted. Employing the concept of the "outlying county" (a county with no towns of over 50,000 population nor contiguous with such a county), Tolley found that their total employment remained the same between 1950 and 1960 (at 15.6 million). Their nonagricultural employment increased by 18%, compared to the national average of 22% during those years, while their agricultural employment fell by 41% compared to the national average of 38%. It is especially important to note that the rise in nonagricultural employment in the outlying counties took place primarily in and around cities and towns with 10,000 to 50,000 population. No job growth was experienced in small towns (between 2,500 and 10,000) and employment actually declined in the villages (2,500 and below).

The main point is this: a concentrated population of at least 10,000 appears to be a requirement for job growth in rural areas. If a county has no such population center (as few of the OEO-defined rural counties do), then the trend has been for a declining number of nonagricultural as well as agricultural jobs. Above this demarcation line, the tendency in rural areas has been a moderate rise of nonagricultural jobs, which has almost offset the decline of farm employment.

Tolley suggests that this 10,000 figure may represent "a balance between cohesive and decentralizing forces" and specifies that employers' search for low-cost labor was the major factor for plant location (or relocation) in outlying areas. In order to attract such employers, however, an

area must have a population center at least 10,000 from which the low-cost labor force can be drawn. Low-cost labor is thus the major decentralizing force that influences employees to move to rural areas. On the other hand, the major "cohesive" forces are requirements for maximum supplies and concentrations of labor and facilities for transportation and communication, such as highways and railroads.

It would seem, then, that the short-term logic of current labor market trends is that a limited number of new employment opportunities — largely in low-wage manufacturing industries — will exist during the remainder of the 1960's for those youth who live within reasonable commuting distance of towns with at least 10,000 population. Their chances for remaining in rural areas will increase as the size of the population center rises toward that of the Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas.

For rural farm youth in the 60's, employment prospects are much worse than for nonfarm rural youth. Bishop and Tolley[43] predict that of all farm males who are between 15 and 24 years old in 1960, less than 50% will still be living on farms by 1970 in the Midwest and East. Less than 33% in the West will be able to do so. And in the South, 80% of the white farm youth and fully 96% of the Negro farm youth will have to move away from the farm. Again, some of these, especially from the South, will find nonfarm employment near their homes in those towns over 10,000, but the trend now indicates that the rural labor market will be unable to meet the demands upon it from rural residents.

All authorities agree that the rural migration to the cities (which in many cases is rural migration to towns over 10,000 and which has frequently pushed the population of these towns over the 50,000 required for their official designation as Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas) will continue, although less dramatically, throughout the 60's. The Labor Department, in the President's Manpower Report of 1967, predicts that the total number of agricultural jobs will fall from the present level of 4.6 million to just over 4 million by 1970.

One of the more promising approaches to the rural labor market is based on an acknowledgement of this dividing line of possible growth at around 10,000. Much in the same way that the Department of Agriculture has, for all practical purposes, abandoned farmers whose potential gross sales cannot, due to various economic, social and geographical factors, hope to exceed $10,000 annually,[44] rural manpower programs could also become geared to the smaller towns that apparently serve as attraction points for rural nonfarm economic growth.

Secretary of Agriculture Freeman has estimated[45] that between two

thirds to three fifths of the rural population lives within 50 miles of these potential labor market centers. It is possible to conclude, therefore, that in the absence of massive economic development programs that would encourage the expansion of job opportunities in areas without population centers, most youth-work planners outside such areas should focus their programs on providing information on jobs outside their catchment areas. The effect would be to draw a distinction between the majority of disadvantaged youth who apparently reside within possible commuting distance of potential growth centers and the minority residing in the most remote and isolated areas.

But it also seems clear that the growth of nonfarm jobs in most rural areas will continue to lag behind the needs of their population, and that migration to urban areas from rural fringes (or the transformation, via population growth, of these fringes into urban centers) will continue. As Sar Levitan[46] notes, "It is pie in the sky to expect that enough local growth centers could be developed. Many of the rural poor will have to look for their fortunes in more distant urban centers."

Another factor in migration is its probable correlation with the national unemployment level. When jobs are known to exist in the cities and towns, rural youth, especially those over 20 and those from the South, tend to leave their homes at a much higher rate than during periods of relatively high national unemployment. Dr. C. E. Bishop[47] has estimated that the inverse relationship between migration from farms and unemployment is on the order of 6 to 1 (this means that farm out-migration increases by 6% for each 1% reduction in the national unemployment rate). This indicates that a public policy committed to true "full employment" could help ease the employment problems of isolated rural areas.

For the rural youth-work program operator, the crucial decision must be based on a close assessment of his local, regional and national labor market. If available evidence indicates few sources of nonagricultural employment in the area (it is assumed that very few, if any youth will be trained for agricultural occupations), then training must be directed toward the nearest active labor market and preparations made to induce mobility and migration.

Relating Training to the Labor Market

The vocational curriculum of most rural schools has been and still is dominated by courses in agriculture. The Vocational Education Act of 1963 now permits certain related courses, such as processing, distribution and service occupations to be offered under agricultural courses, and certain

other new non-farm offerings are expected to gear rural vocational training more realistically to the labor market. This reform, mild enough when compared to the need for restructuring the entire rural education curriculum, has reportedly been slow in its implementation. The rural schools remain dominated by agricultural programs four years after the Act's passage.

The MDTA training and retraining programs had been authorized for an estimated 100,000 rural residents during the first four years of the Act's operation, or 25% of the total authorized (this figure does not necessarily correspond to the numbers of persons actually entering courses). Of these, 15% to be trained for agricultural work.

About 30,000 of the rural MDTA trainees were youth under 22, who were trained chiefly in skilled and semi-skilled industrial employment and some who also received transportation subsidies to institutes and OJT training sites. Critics of the MDTA results report that trainees have generally consisted of persons who least needed subsidized work training, and that the poorest and least educated have been under-represented. Since recruiting for such programs is generally conducted through state employment service offices, the lack of such offices in half of the nation's 2,500 rural counties is considered a major factor reducing their impact on disadvantaged rural youth. Finally, recalling the great concentration of such youth in the rural South, continued racial discrimination in some of the area's state employment services (Negroes are almost nonexistent in professional and supervisory position in Southern employment services) further decreases the program's effectiveness.

The Neighborhood Youth Corps states that about one-quarter of the 63,000 out-of-school postions available for fiscal 1967 are expected to be filled by rural youth (who make up almost half of the eligible target population). The Neighborhood Youth Corps reports that "recruitment of out-of-school youth in rural areas was difficult because of the dispersed population and, in many instances, the absence of a central community organization."

On the other hand, some rural program operators indicate that in the most disadvantaged rural areas, where almost every rural youth is poor and seeking work, recruitment has been no problem. This, of course, refers primarily to the South where, Seaver reports, the $1 an hour paid to Neighborhood Youth Corps trainees is so far above the prevailing wage that some youth have deliberately dropped out of school to take advantage of it. In contrast, then, to low-density rural areas where recruitment may be a major problem, there are indications that Neighborhood Youth Corps enrollment in other areas is limited only by the number of slots available.

The residential training centers of the Job Corps, which may be the

most appropriate youth-work programs for some rural youth, are expected to provide service to almost 35,000 rural youth (40% of the total) in fiscal 1967. Again, recruitment problems have been cited by the Job Corps in the past to explain its inability to meet goals.

The total number of rural youth that the three main federal youth-work programs are expected to serve in fiscal 1968 is approximately 60,000 (8,000 per year in MDTA, 17,000 in the out-of-school Neighborhood Youth Corps and 35,000 as a goal for the Job Corps). The target population is as many as 2 million poor out-of-school, out-of-work rural youth. The OEO itself admits that only 21% of the $72 million which it has granted CAPs for manpower (and "manpower related") programs between 1964 and 1966 has gone to rural areas. The $15 million total was divided between $7.6 million for typical manpower activities and $7.4 for the Nelson amendment rural beautification projects.

Migration

If a rural youth-work program determines that training for local jobs is not realistic, it may plan to train youngsters for migration to "where the jobs are." This poses a variety of special problems, not the least of which is the psychological preparation for the "cultural shock" of a new, usually urban environment. This factor was cited by New Jersey rural program planners who reported a high drop-out rate among youth they had placed in jobs in urban areas in their state. Such youth apparently were unable to adjust to either the working and living conditions in the cities, and often returned home.

The program now gives such potential migrants orientation trips, but perhaps some form of continued assistance and support might be necessary. The possibility of voluntary residential centers in the larger cities for rural migrants might be explored, where the youngsters could have access to special guidance and counseling services during their period of adjustment.

Finally, the question of family vs. individual migration must be faced. A special study of mobility patterns[48] has shown that most Southern Negroes move to cities where they have some family ties, and that these relatives are the prime source of orientation and job finding for the new migrants. Recalling that the most common age for migration (for both Negro and white youth) is between 17 and 18, further study on the encouragement of family migration should be made. That public policy can be an important factor in this area is shown in the experience of such nations as Germany, France and Austria, which successfully encouraged rural to urban migration

with relocation and tax subsidies, and of Italy, which until 1960, just as successfully discouraged it through fairly strict control of housing space.

The discussion has suggested that the first task of the rural youth-work program planner is to determine (perhaps using the guideline of the job-developing rural community of 10,000 or more) whether training and placement activities can be effectively directed toward the local labor market. If not, the mobility provisions of MDTA demonstration projects might be utilized to first prepare for, and then encourage, the migration of rural youth. The optimum circumstances of this migration requires further study.

VI: CONCLUSION: THE "OPTIMUM" RURAL PROGRAM AREA

In focusing on the problems typically encountered in rural youth-work programs, this discussion has tried to avoid the "how to do it" manual approach (for such materials, the reader is referred to the handbook being prepared by the OEO's Rural Services Division, the notes and bibliography on pages 55-56 and for technical assistance, to the Rural Services Division and the rural manpower specialist reportedly attached to each Bureau of Employment Security Regional office). It has also tried to limit discussion of problems common to both rural and urban programs, such as funding, coordination of various components, organization and staffing which are treated in a variety of training materials.[49]

We have identifed the following issues emerging from our discussions of size and scope as typically rural or, if also confronted by urban program operators, to be of special concern and interest to the rural program operator and his manpower staff:

1) Dispersed Population (Low Population Density)
2) Transportation
3) Availability of Work Sites
4) Level of Existing Human Services
5) Multiplicity of Government Units
6) Political Problems

In addition, we have discussed rural aspects of administrative and labor market problems.

Population Density:

With respect to the first issue, population density, we have concluded that somewhere between the overall rural density of between 10 and 20 persons per square mile and the overall urban figure of between 150 and 450, is a point below which typically rural problems will engage the primary attention of the program operator, and above which the problems will tend to resemble urban ones. A useful refinement of this figure is suggested by the Regional Plan Association,[50] which places the density of functionally defined rural areas in the Northeast at below 100/sq. mi.

It goes on to define as exurban, scattered sub-divisions and housing along rural roads with densities ranging between 100 and 1,000/sq. mi. in which fewer than 2% of the population commutes to work in urban areas; suburban as small cities, towns and suburban communities with densities between 1,000 and 10,000/sq. mi. in which at least 20% commute to urban

areas; and urban areas as older cities with densities between 10,000 and 100,000/sq. mi.

These categories indicate that a population density of 100/sq. mi. might be the functional dividing line between rural and urban areas. In any case, rural program operators might consider this as a broad first step in planning programs and anticipating operational problems.

Transportation:

With respect to the problem of transportation, we have suggested that the catchment area of non-residential programs be planned with the goal of a maximum of one hour travel time for enrollees and trainees from their homes to the work site, training center or OJT. If this strikes some as unduly short, the Regional Plan Association has found that the average one way commuting time in U.S. cities ranges from 25 to 35 minutes.

Work Sites:

The availability of work sites does not lend itself to the type of quantitative "minimal conditions" arrived at for the first two categories. Instead, if the program operator finds that such sites are inadequate both for work training (NYC) and on-the-job training (OJT), the possibility of residential or mobile services that extend the catchment area should be considered, together with referrals of eligible youth to residential Job Corps centers.

Existing Services:

As to the adequacy of existing services, several population standards have been put forward as indicating the minimal levels of population which will support varying levels of services. Although, as we concluded, such levels vary with the incidence of need, we should mention the finding[51] that per capita costs of rural county government tend to reach a peak at a service population of 30,000 and to decline sharply above that point. This finding suggests that about 2,000 of the nation's 2,500 rural counties are too small[52] to efficiently provide their residents with minimal public services at reasonable cost.

We must note that this 30,000 figure relates only to rural counties. The Regional Plan Association indicates[53] that a population of at least 200,000 is required to provide basic higher education, health, power, sewage and retail trade services at the present state of technology. It calls this the "desirable tributary population below which (provision of these services) is inefficient or unsatisfactory," but cautions that this is not identical with the concept of an "optimum size" community.

Although we must accept differing levels of services between urban and rural areas, the possibility of reducing the 200,000 figure for urban-level services through technological development should not be excluded.

The 30,000 "efficiency" figure for rural areas is strikingly similar to the minimal number of pupils required for a school district to provide adequately diversified and specialized educational services — 1,500[54] (if between 5% and 10% of the total population are in school at any given time). Well over half of all rural school districts serve less than this number of pupils, suggesting the need for more consolidation and the provision of residential educational services at the high school level for the most isolated and sparsely populated rural areas.

Administration and Governmental Relations:

To provide catchment areas that more reasonably relate to concentrations of the target populations and to avoid the problems of dealing with a multiplicity of rural county governments and other special service districts, we have suggested that centralized state-wide rural manpower programs, as in New Jersey, are a possibility for some states. Such centralized programs must give thought to regionalization together with adequate attention to middle levels of decision making authority. They also hold out a greater possibility of coping with local vested interests who are out of sympathy with efforts to increase the economic (and therefore the political) power of the poor.

In addition, the development of multi-county service centers whose catchment areas (the "Communities of Solutions") cross county boundaries freely are another administrative alternative in some rural areas. Beyond these suggestions, the problems of OEO manpower programs relations with established political and service groups become more similar to those confronted by urban program operators, although the political opposition (especially in the rural South) is much stronger.

Labor Market:

Finally, we have concluded that the labor market for most rural youth is located either

1) rural areas within commuting distance of population centers of at least 10,000 (the potential "growth centers"), or
2) urban areas

The "Minimal Optimum Community"

It may be assumed that if a rural youth-work was established in a catchment area with (1) at least 30,000 total population including (2) a town of

at least 10,000 and (assuming an incidence of disadvantaged youth of 2%) with a (3) resulting target population of disadvantaged rural youth of at least 600 to recruit from, and that this target population lived (4) within an hour's travel time from the location of the program's primary services, then the other problems facing rural programs, such as the lack of work sites and human services, would also be reduced to at least manageable size. Such a catchment area would be a "Minimal Optimum Community" in terms of the problems faced by rural program operators.

We have attempted to calculate a crude approximation of the minimal population density required to support such a community program in rural areas. Beginning with the area population requirement of 30,000 for efficient provision of services, and arriving at a disadvantaged youth population of about 600 from this total, we can say:

1) Assuming an hour of travel can be translated into a circle with a radius of 35 miles (average travel speed between the farthest point to the center), the size of total catchment area would be almost 3,800 square miles within which the total population must equal at least 30,000; then

2) The minimum population density required to support a rural youth-work program would be almost 10 persons per square mile.

Recalling that the overall population density of the nation's rural areas is barely this figure, we might conclude that only in those rural areas with above-average population density can an efficient youth-work program be expected to operate. The above calculation of course, is basically intended to illustrate how rural program planners can use concepts of scope and size, and is not intended to be a reliable guide for the individual program.

We have found that economic resources influence the availability of service perhaps equally with population density, and that with above-average resources rural service quality can approach and even exceed urban levels. But for disadvantaged rural youth, such local resources are rarely available, since, to emphasize it again, almost half of all poor rural youth reside in the South, and a large number of the remainder are concentrated in northern Appalachia and other "poverty pockets."

The crucial implication of this finding is that rural programs, no less than urban, must be planned on the basis of as much specific information on their target population and its realistic prospects in the labor market as it is possible to obtain. The "minimal condition" and the "minimal optimum community" concepts suggested in this paper are intended only to indicate guidelines against which the specific character of local planning and operational problems can be measured.

VII: NOTES

1. U.S. Bureau of the Census, estimate as of July 1, 1966.
2. This figure was calculated by projecting an increase in this category (from 55% in 1960 to 57% in 1966) in accord with recent trends, and applying it against the 56.8 million projection of the total 1966 rural population.
3. This figure was calculated by projecting a 1% increase (since 1960) in this category.
4. This figure was calculated by projecting a 2% decrease in this category.
5. U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1920 final figures, 1966 projections.
6. Testimony of Sargent Shriver before the President's National Advisory Commission on Rural Poverty, Feb. 15, 1967, p. 8.
7. Ibid., p. 3.
8. Special Census Bureau Tabulation based on March, 1965, survey of 1964 annual cash incomes.
9. The SSA's poverty-income standard takes into account family size, composition and place of residence and is adjusted for price changes.
10. Special Census, op. cit.
11. Calculated from Special Census, op. cit.
12. Ibid.
13. U.S. Bureau of the Census, cited in **Rural Youth in Crisis** (Dept. of HEW, 1964) p. 5.
14. 25% of 5.7 million non-farm rural youth (1960) = 1.4 million poor;
    33% of 1.9 million rural farm youth = 600,000.
15. U.S. Bureau of the Census, cited in **Rural Youth**, op. cit., p. 9.
16. Ibid.
17. U.S. Census estimate, July 1, 1966.
18. Final Report, "A New Attack on Rural Poverty," Public Services Division, Northern Michigan University (Marquette, 1966).
19. Lawrence O. Houstoun, memorandum, "Summary of Experimental and Demonstration Manpower Programs" (USDL/OMAT, Sept. 30, 1964).
20. Memorandum to the Center for the Study of Unemployed Youth, New York University, from staff member of the West Virginia State Employment Service, Charleston, (June, 1967).
21. Final Report to OMAT, New Jersey Rural Youth Development Program, June, 1966, p. 4.
22. From statement by George Esser, Jr., North Carolina Fund, before National Advisory Commission on Rural Poverty, Washington, Feb. 15, 1967.
23. From author's notes on "Workshop on Operational Problems of the Neighborhood Youth Corps," sponsored by Center for the Study of Unemployed Youth, New York University, Plattsburgh, New York, November, 1966.
24. Ibid.
25. "Planning for Mental Health Services in Rural Areas" in Sage Foundation Conference Report (N. Y. 1959).
26. Harvard Dean John Munro, for example, has recently become director of Freshman studies at a Negro college in Alabama.
27. **Rural Youth**, op. cit., p. 65.
28. **Proceedings,** NACD conference on rural poverty, (Washington, 1967), p. 6.
29. Testimony before National Advisory Commission on Rural Poverty, Washington, Feb. 14, 1967.
30. Testimony of Ben Chinitz, former Deputy Assistant to the Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development, before National Advisory Commission on Rural Poverty, Feb. 14, 1967.
31. Testimony of Sargent Shriver, op. cit., p. 3.
32. U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1960.
33. Case History produced by the Center for the Study of Unemployed Youth, N.Y.U., 1967.
34. **Rural Opportunities**, January, 1967, Vol. 2, no. 1.
35. National Commission on Community Health Services, **Health is a Community Affair** (Cambridge, 1966), p. 2.
36. NACD **Proceedings**, op. cit., p. 24-25.
37. "Mississippi's 'Six Month Bag'," **American Child** (Spring, 1957), p. 12.
38. E. A. Cebotarev and G. W. King, "Attitudes Toward Anti-Poverty Programs in the Extension Service: A Case Study," paper read at annual meeting of the Rural Sociology Society, Miami, 1966.
39. Bachmura, F. T., "The Manpower Development & Training Act of 1962 — its Significance for Rural Areas," **Journal of Farm Economics,** (Feb., 1963), p. 61.
40. **Manpower Report of the President** (April, 1967), p. 104.

41. Ibid., p. 109.
42. "On Employment Prospects for Rural Communities," paper prepared for the National Committee on Children & Youth, 1963. A condensed version appears in **Rural Youth In Crisis**, op. cit., p. 257.
43. C. E. Bishop & G. S. Tolley, **Manpower in Farming and Related Occupations** (GPO: 1962).
44. Secretary of Agriculture Orville Freeman has admitted: "It is unrealistic to expect the farmer (with less than $10,000 in gross annual sales) to enter the main stream of commercial agriculture," NACD **Proceedings**, op. cit., p. 14.
45. Testimony before the National Advisory Commission on Rural Poverty, Feb. 15, 1967, p. 15.
46. Testimony before the National Advisory Commission on Rural Poverty, Feb. 16, 1967, p. 6.
47. Cited, ibid.
48. "Negro-White Differences in Geographical Mobility," **Social Security Bulletin** (May, 1967), p. 16.
49. See, for example, the catalog of publications of the Center for the Study of Unemployed Youth, N.Y.U. (853 Broadway, N. Y., N. Y. 10003).
50. **The Region's Growth: A Report of the Second Regional Plan**, (N. Y.: May, 1967), p. 19.
51. Martin, R. C., **Grass Roots: Rural Democracy in America**, (N. Y.: 1965), p. 53.
52. U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1960.
53. **The Region's Growth**, op. cit., p. 21.
54. Martin, ibid.

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